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## Anti-Americanism from an American

**Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz lectures on U.S. imperialism**

Tuesday, November 09, 2004 @10:00AM

BY IMAI WELCH

Aggressive and imperialist actions by the United States are not modern phenomena; they are rooted in the founding and expansion of the U.S. This is particularly visible through the U.S.'s history of aggression towards its aboriginal people, according to historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz.

An anti-imperialist, Dunbar-Ortiz elaborated this concept during her public lecture "Cowboys and Indians: A Historical Perspective on U.S. Imperialism," held at Concordia on Nov. 1 and sponsored by QPIRG Concordia and its partners.

She noted that though much of U.S. historical myth and fact is founded on people fleeing and fighting aggression and imperialism. We [Americans] have yet to have a real anti-imperialist revolution in the United States.

This, Dunbar-Ortiz noted, is largely due to the fact that many early colonists, especially the Scots-Irish, had been imperialist-style aggressors. Upon arriving in the colonial U.S., their policies were written into the Declaration of Independence.

Throughout the lecture and question period, she asked once and periodically implied the question, What is so scary about dismantling [U.S. imperialism and the U.S. empire]?

Going into a detailed history of U.S. imperialism, Dunbar-Ortiz noted its roots trace back to the Crusades and the Inquisition with their emphasis on cleanness of blood, to the British colonists who appropriated that idea while colonizing the U.S. Subsequently,

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aboriginal peoples were expelled or slaughtered. The new U.S. and its western settlers, in turn, took on that concept. Though most of the imperialism was based on race, Dunbar-Ortiz noted that whiteness as an ideology (and its subsequent imperialism) is far more complex than skin colour, quoting *Don Quixote*.

In response to a question about the need for an intellectual revolution, Dunbar-Ortiz said that the younger generation are... less attached to the National Myth, making the time ripe for anti-imperialist revolution in the U.S. Elaborating when asked how this myth could be undermined further, she noted the need for the U.S. underclasses to be in solidarity with U.S. Indian movements, and strive to include Native perspectives of U.S. history.

At the end, Dunbar-Ortiz made it clear that the only way to end U.S. imperialism is to end the U.S. empire, noting that this ending means dismantling imperialism, not devolution, and creating something different instead. She noted that the U.S. and its people must be involved in this process, declaring in this context that there cannot be too much anti-Americanism for me; I welcome it.

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